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A
DISCOURSE
AGAINST THE
FATAL PRACTICE
OF
DUELLING;

OCCASIONED BY A
LATE MELANCHOLY EVENT,
And preached at St. MARY'S Church, in MANCHESTER,
On SUNDAY the 2^d of MARCH, 1783.
By the Rev. JOHN BENNETT.

What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Gen. 4. 10.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

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AGASSI, THE

FATAL PRACTICE

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D. U. E. L. I. N. G.

OF THE

NATE METAMORPHOLY EVENT

AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE COURT OF CHANCERY IN LANCASHIRE

ON THE PETITION OF THE PLAINTIFFS

By the Hon. J. O. F. WHITE



Printed by J. O. F. WHITE, 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

THE LANCASHIRE

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PREFACE to the READER.

A SPIRIT of Duelling once, more immediately confined to the Metropolis, hath, of late, displayed its malignant influence even in this northern part of the kingdom. Individuals have thought their sensibilities attacked, have given or accepted challenges, and thus attempted to raise a reputation to themselves upon the ruins of Humanity, Conscience and Religion.

The late catastrophe, on all accounts, appeared too great an Epoch in the annals of this vice, to sink into oblivion. As a lively instance of its fatal effects, it seemed to require the vigorous interference of the Moralist and the Divine: as an aggregate of tender and affecting circumstances, it is calculated to soften the most callous heart, and make the most dissipated think for a moment; and, as presenting the Urn of an unfortunate youth, it hath certainly a claim upon Friendship for its pity, upon Compassion, for a tear.

The Author, therefore, from pure motives of conscience, hath availed himself of this distressing incident, at a time, when humanity is supposed to be bleeding, and the general attention interested and awakened, to beat down, if possible, this visionary system, and guard all youth, in future, against the spreading contagion of so horrid an example. If, therefore, very particular allusions are sometimes made in the course of the Sermon, to this melancholy fact, he hopes they will be interpreted as springing from this principle, and not designed to hurt the feelings either of the deceased's friends or of him who survives

survives. To the first, he would, if possible, administer consolation; and, natural compassion forbids him to aggravate the sorrows of the latter.

The chaste reader of Sermons may be surprised to find such a variety of heathenish classical allusions interspersed through the whole of a christian discourse, and interwoven with its frame. He can only remark, in his own vindication, that this is not his favourite, or by any means, his *general* plan of instruction, but a temporary accommodation to the taste, the sentiments and prejudices of youth, who are frequently more struck with a Hero than a Saint, and not less disposed to admire a saying of a Socrates or a Plato, than even the words of him, "who spake as never man spake."

With regard to the presumption of appearing in the press, particularly on a subject, where the delicacy of many living characters is interested, he can assure his Readers, that he hath not by any means consulted his own wishes or inclination. He would much rather live in the *shade*, than court the *precarious* approbation of the world. He hath been solely guided by the advices of some judicious friends, by a sense of duty and the dictates of his heart; and, therefore, looks for a reward in the approbation of his conscience, which is infinitely more certain than human applauses, and more durable than all the eulogies of Fame.

N. B. It is but literary justice to acknowledge, that a few of the Anecdotes were suggested to him by the perusal of Dr. Dodd's Discourses, vol. 3. These are carefully marked with a p.

MATT

MATT. 5. 39.
WHOSOEVER SHALL SMITE THEE ON THY RIGHT CHEEK,
TURN TO HIM THE OTHER ALSO.

WHEN we consider the nature of the Christian religion, which requires us to "love * even our enemies," to bear indignities with meekness, and if "one † cheek be smitten, to turn also the other," it becomes a matter of serious astonishment, that so very barbarous a custom, as that of Duelling, should not only be permitted or connived at in a state, where Christianity is *externally* professed and established, but should likewise entitle its inhuman practisers to some degree of honour and distinction.

War, indeed, of every species, is absolutely indefensible upon the principles of the gospel, excepting in cases, (not, perhaps, very frequently occurring) where it is necessary for self-defence, and the preservation of our lawful rights. If avarice, if resentment, if ambition, or the thirst of military greatness let loose the fatal sword, and "bid ‡ it

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* Matt. 5. 44.

† Matth. 5. 39.

‡ Ezek. 14. 17.

Puffendorf. de Offic. Lib. 2. C. 16. Grot. de Jure Belli et pacis passim.

go through the land ;" the ravages it spreads—the desolations it occasions—the cries and shrieks, and horrors it creates, are chargeable upon the Prince, who, from such baser motives, originally permits them † “ The blood * that is spilled, will cry aloud for vengeance.” Murdered parents, mourning widows, and solitary orphans, will be so many injured witnesses against him, when he stands a naked, unprotected Individual, stripped of his greatness, and unescorted by his guards, before the supreme Tribunal of his God. What shadow then of an apology can be offered by the Duellist, or what single ray of hope dawn on his benighted mind, who, for reasons, still more frivolous—perhaps the casual misplacing of a syllable—perhaps the thirst of visionary honour—sometimes to gratify an irritable pride—perhaps through the

* How erroneous is our common estimation of human character and glory! An Alexander or a Cæsar have gained unfading laurels by being, in reality, the destroyers of their species, and the *butchers* of mankind. However we are dazzled with the splendour of their actions, yet cooler reason views them with abhorrence, and impartial history will render the infamy of their characters immortal. How necessary is it for young people, in the reading of the classics, to be taught these useful, Christian discriminations, to divest the savage hero of his greatness, and view him as a man. In this, Rollin, as an instructor of youth, shines with unrivalled lustre. “ Vivit vivetque per omnem sæculorum memoriam.” His learning was exceeded, only, by his piety; and the happy assemblage of these excellent qualities, rendered every hero a monitor of virtue, and every classic incident a lesson both of moral and Christian instruction.

† Gen. 4. 10.

the heat of a momentary resentment, or the impulse of intoxication—sends a fellow creature—it may be his acquaintance—it may be his nearest friend, into Eternity, with all his vices * blossoming upon him—or rushes himself (dreadful alternative !) into the presence of his God, a martyr to the blackest or most trifling passions, which can agitate the breast ?

The Turks, whom we consider as infinitely behind us in the knowledge of religion, or the progress of civilization, regard the act of Duelling with the abhorrence it deserves, and may, therefore, in a future judgment, condemn the men of the present generation, upon whom “ the sun “ of righteousness, hath risen without, in this respect, “ bringing healing in his wings.” One of their † writers, in a letter to an acquaintance, dated from France, hath this memorable observation :—“ The best friends tear each other “ on the smallest occasions, and prepare for a Duel, in such “ a manner, as will appear to you, exceedingly ridiculous. I “ cannot but call these Christians, fools, who suffer such “ customs amongst them ; and yet, adore a Messiah, who is a “ God of peace, and who call us, Barbarians, when, yet, “ they are the only people, who teach us, and all other “ nations, the art of single combat.”—And a certain hea-
then

* Shakespeare. † Turkish Spy.

then * King, made it an invâriable point to banish from his dominions, as so many pests and nuisances to society, any two persons, who were marked by this dangerous litigious disposition.

It is not, indeed, wonderful, upon a little reflexion, that the precepts of Christianity have not influence enough to correct so brutal and infamous a practice.—Amongst Youth of a certain class and age, it is too fashionable to despise the injunctions of the gospel, as † conducing to a mean pusillanimity of temper (though, if any thing in the world can inspire real fortitude, or, at least, come in aid to constitutional firmness, it is these venerable informations of the Scripture.) But as we live in an age, which boasts its superior degrees of politeness, it is amazing that such a secondary motive doth not lead us to the entire abolition of a custom, which is founded in Gothic ‡ ignorance and barbarism—

* Leland's life of Philip, King of Macedon.

† This objection hath been made to Christianity by some deistical writers. See Chubb's posthumous works—and Leland's view of deist. writ.

‡ Amongst the ancient Gauls and many other uncultivated nations, where property or honour were not sufficiently ascertained by the laws, or those laws clearly understood, single combat was the dernier resort for determining the dispute.—See Anc. universal history, vol. 18. 4to. It is astonishing with what a religious care these people preserved the heads of the many they had slain in these dreadful encounters, and with what an ostentatious cruelty they displayed them to strangers, as emblem^s

barism—originated, principally, in the ridiculous, and now, justly, exploded notions of chivalry and romance, and is unworthy of a man, not only as he is a *christian*, but as making the most distant claims to elegance and refinement. I believe the prevalence of Duelling, in this kingdom, is, considerably, owing to our fondness for even the fopperies and vices of our neighbours on the continent, among whom it is esteemed honourable, and where to have killed, in this inhuman manner, a number of his fellow creatures, is, generally, admitted as a sovereign claim to honour and caresses. France, indeed, hath, of late, been a fruitful

land
 emblems of their fortitude, and trophies of distinction—See Herodotus, lib. 6. c. 65.—Their idea was, that Heaven would interfere in favour of justice, and that he whose cause was wrong, always fell in the action.—They were not, alas! enlightened with the rays of divine truth; they knew not that this life was a state of probation; that the cause of right can only be decided at a future tribunal; that innocence, often, sinks under woe, and sees villainy “in high places,” and must expect its *ultimate* and *just* retribution, only in another world. But the most prolific and universal source of these fatal engagements, must be looked for in that ridiculous system of knight-errantry, which fascinated unenlightened Europe for so many ages, and which the ingenious Cervantes hath so ably combated, in his excellent inimitable *Quixotte*—See *Don Quixotte* at large—Upon this principle, in some degree, is it still continued in *illuminated* Europe, over countries, where property is, fully, ascertained; where the laws admit not any species of injury or little misconstruction; where the page of knowledge is clear and immense, and should have banished absurdity, and where the Gospel shines with a meridian blaze—Hear, Christian, and blush at thy conduct!

and convenient nursery of almost every fashionable absurdity, which distinguishes our manners; and threatens to annihilate those sterling virtues, which, once, characterized the English as a people, and made their name admired and revered to the extremities of the globe. And till Britain hath given up this ridiculous taste for the customs and the maxims of, so *frivolous* a * nation; her sun, I am persuaded, will gradually be setting, and her empire drawing to a close.

It may, perhaps, be retorted upon me, that the legislature hath enacted several severe laws against the custom of Duelling, and that all military † people, in particular, are laid under such restrictions, in this article, that they can neither give or accept a challenge, without the danger of forfeiting their respective promotions. There are, likewise, laws extant in France of a similar complexion. Henry ‡ the

* Hence spring most of our prevailing follies. Hence, in Religion, we have borrowed infidelity from the dangerous writings of a Raynal and Voltaire—Hence in Morals, we have transplanted a licentiousness, heretofore unknown, and, principally, within the walls of this seducing Court, did a Chesterfield imbibe that system of deception, which his elegant pen and distinguished abilities have, so successfully published and diffused through almost every part of this insatuated kingdom.—Upon the origin of Duelling, see further Hume's Hist. of Eng. Vol. 4. p. 82, 4to. and Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws, Vol. 2. passim.

† This, I believe, is explained at large in the Articles of War.

‡ For the edict, which this Monarch issued against them—See Memoirs de Sully, Tom 2. Livre Treizieme, p. 149.

the fourth discountenanced Duelling by his injunctions; though he fatally encouraged it by his conduct and example; and it is mentioned by historians, as no inconsiderable honour to Louis * the 14th, that he issued out so rigid an edict against this horrid and abominable practice.

But what are Laws in Britain or in France, if the executive authority be suffered to sleep, and if Monarchy inflicts not its royal disapprobation, and stamps the action with infamy and guilt. In this respect the “† Magistrate bears the sword in vain,” and in vain the King sits on his throne. The ‡ Sovereign of one country is not, in this instance, a defender

* L'abolition des Duels fut un des plus grands services rendus à la patrie. Ces Combats avoient été autorisés autrefois par les Rois, par les parlemens même & par l'Eglise: et quoiqu'ils fussent défendus depuis Henry quatre, cette funeste coutume subsistait plus que jamais. Le fameux combat des la frette, de quatre contre quatre en 1663, fait ce, qui déterminâ Louis 14. à ne plus pardonner. — *Sicte de Louis 14.* Fol. Vol. p. 311.

For Laws in France at a still earlier period against Duelling. — See *Mod. Univ. Hist.* Vol. 24. p. 452. 456 Edit. One, in particular, of Charles the 9th. Lord Bacon's Works, Fol. Vol. 2. p. 565.

† Rom. 13. 4. The Author doth not mean a reflection upon Majesty. The king of England, is, confessedly, a religious and an exemplary character. But it is wonderful, that the clemency, which, so frequently, hath been numbered amongst his royal virtues, hath not led him to some vigorous act of interference on the subject under contemplation.

“defender of the Faith,” and the title of “most Christian Majesty” is an insult to the other: and should not even Kings tremble when they think, that the annexing to this act of Duelling some dreadful punishment * or mark of disgrace, might have saved the lives of many thoughtless and presumptuous subjects to the state, and (what is infinitely more) saved their immortal souls.

The melancholy event which is recent in your memories, and, I trust, will long remain imprinted on your hearts, as a dreadful monument of this prevailing crime, hath plainly led me into this train of reflexions, and I hope its tragic nature will induce you to give them that serious attention, which their genuine importance, and their connexion with the dearest interests of society and religion forcibly demand.

If

* See Spectator, vol. 2. No. 97.

In Sweden, Duelling is punished with the Survivor's death, and stigmas affixed to the memories of both parties; but if neither die, both are closely confined for two years, to live on bread and water. So rigid a punishment makes this barbarous practice less frequent in this country, and persons of the most scrupulous punctilio think it no breach of honour to apply for reparation to the respective provincial court, where the aggressor is made to give public satisfaction. To this, is likewise, added a very considerable pecuniary mulct.—See Williams's Northern Govern. Fol. Vol. 1. p. 628, and Mod. Univ. Hist. Vol. 33. p. 22. and another Edit same Vol. p. 226. Lord Bacon proposeth that a person who sends a challenge should be banished for several years from the face of his Sovereign.—See this subject excellently treated, Fol. Vol. 2. p. 566.

If He, who might have lived *long* the honour of his friends—a defender of his country—a servant of his King—if He, who might have propped a trembling Parent's steps—might have been an ornament to all his Relations—or, in future life, the hope and comfort of still tenderer ties—if such an one perished—as it were, in a moment—a moment, too, of thoughtless giddiness, when he dreamt not of death—with little opportunity of preparing for his exit—or deliberately thinking what would be the consequences—if, for him a * parent mourns, and †“ refuses to be comforted”—if, for him, the sharpest daggers are now fixed in a brother or a sister's breast—if, for him even friendship bleeds, and calls in vain on corruption to restore him—if all these dismal consequences have arisen from the practice, to which I am alluding, is it not my duty, without intending the least offence to either of the characters, of whom I had not the slightest personal knowledge, to paint, in lively colours, to the giddy and the young, the impropriety,

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* This is, *literally*, the case. He hath left such a mother and such sisters, inconsolable for his loss. His history is, indeed, a tragedy of finished woe, and his death the more to be deplored, as it appears from the concurring testimonies of all, who had the honour of his acquaintance, that he came to this town, a very amiable youth, pleasing in his manners, and inoffensive in his conduct; was descended from a very respectable family, and heir to a considerable fortune and estate,

† Jerm. 31. 15.

ety, the absurdity, the horrors of this crime, and shew them, while they bewail the melancholy fate of so unfortunate a youth, how they may avoid his lamentable end.

Leaving, then, Christianity for a while, out of sight, I shall argue with young people upon their own principles, and endeavour to expose their mistaken notions in the commission of this crime.

It may be urged by some, in defence of this practice, that it is necessary for self-defence, and the preservation of our own lives. But this reasoning seems to be fallacious, and this plea cannot, in general, be admitted. The love of life, and the desire of self-preservation, are, for the wisest and most obvious reasons, closely interwoven with the human frame; and whenever our persons are unjustly assaulted, to repel force by force is allowable, certainly, upon this as well as every other principle of justice. But there are surely *other* methods of guarding against violence besides the rash determination of either falling ourselves, or being instruments of destruction* to another—"I have a sword (said a great man) to prevent "assassination; and to chastise insolence, a *cane*." Such a case, however, sometimes, may exist, and where it does, it is certainly a considerable alle-

viation

* See Puff. de Duell. pass. C. 5. Lib. 1.

violation of the guilt—I believe it really did in the instance* before us. For the sake of humanity and the person who survives, I rejoice to confess it. One would gladly throw a veil over every circumstance which might aggravate his remorse, and, in his present sorrows, generously forget every past appearance which might sharpen recollection.

“† Charity hopeth all things, believeth all things.” Thus much, indeed, may be fairly advanced in favour of military people in general, that whilst their situation continues what it is, unredressed by a vigorous execution of the laws, the alternative is to fight, or to incur the insults and contempt of all their associates—a circumstance, which should make men particularly cautious, how they give them such provocations, or rouse them to resistance.

“ But Duelling, you will say, if not absolutely necessary to the preservation of our lives, yet it is the only adequate security against rudenesses and insults”—This apology however, will not bear a moment’s reflexion. It possesses, by such a strange combination, the very opposite powers of amplification and diminution.

It should be observed in favour of H—, that he would very gladly have declined this rencounter. He was confined in a room, from which there was no opportunity of escaping, and had submitted to some attacks, before he attempted to act on the defensive, or gave the fatal blow. The Jury therefore brought in their verdict, Self-defence.”

† 1 Cor. 13. 7.

tion and contraction; it swells little incivilities to such an enormous size, and so preposterously diminishes the value of existence, that no Duellist can skulk behind it as a refuge from his crimes.—Little rudenesses, in short, are matters of no moment, and life is a sacred deposit of the highest. Suppose the sum total of the various affronts, which have gradually been accumulating in all the circles of society from the foundation of the world, they could not, all collectively, justify *one* Duel, or atone for the loss of *one* precious life; of *one* single Individual to his friends and to the world. Such a plea, likewise, carries, in its very nature, a severe reflexion on our manners and our hearts. It supposes, in one view, that we are a very unpolished people, who cannot have an intercourse without mutual provocations; and, in another, that we are possessed of little magnanimity, because it is, certainly, the province of magnanimity, considered merely as* an heathenish virtue, to pass by little, trifling provocations, and bury them in the grave of an eternal oblivion. For any *essential* injuries or wrongs, the Laws of the kingdom have provided a redress; and for those smaller offences which are placed in a middle class, which amount

* See Mar. Antonin. Lib. 7.

Seneca Lib. 2. de Ira C. 32. Lib. 3. C. 5. Patern. Lib. 2. C. 56. Sueton. in vita Caesar. C. 73. Liv. Hist. Lib. 40. C. 46. Juven. Sat. 13. V. 190. Cic. de Offic. Lib. 1. C. 11.

amount not to injuries, but are construed into affronts, it will surely be no prodigious stretch of generosity to overlook and forgive. It should be considered, likewise, whether revenge, if you choose to indulge it, is not, sometimes, most effectually gratified by the dignity of silence and the majesty of contempt.

“ But you are called upon by your *honour*, as a Gentleman, to resent an affront.” Let us not, however, mistake one another. Before I proceed any further, let us plainly come to an explanation of terms. * Honour, I, always, understood, not only to involve virtue in its nature, but virtue in its highest stages of refinement; not only to include integrity and justice, humanity and compassion, but even the very essence of these amiable qualities; not only to be goodness, in its infinite relations, but goodness animated with such a nice and exquisite sensibility, as to shrink, by its own internal impulse, from the shadow of a meanness, or the idea of a crime. Is then the very *refinement* of virtue so diametrically opposite to *all virtue's laws*? Is it the very essence of compassion to be *cruel*, and of goodness to *distress*? Can the nicest sense of honour be thus *dishonourable*, and of justice thus *unjust*? This principle would not suffer

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you

* See an excellent paper on this subject in the World.

you to rob an individual of his character or fortune, and will it permit you to deprive him of existence? It would not allow you to say a painful thing to a person of the opposite sex, and will it suffer you to murder him, who is dearer than her life? Judge for yourselves of the flagrant inconsistencies to which you are reduced, by endeavouring to maintain so ridiculous a system; and know, that *real* honour can never, possibly, act in opposition to virtue,* or patronize a crime.†

But, " You have received a challenge, and what method must you take? if you do not accept it, you are immediately stigmatized for cowardice or meanness, and obliged to pass your future days in obscurity and disgrace." Permit me to recommend to your imitation, in such a dilemma, the conduct of Augustus Cæsar—a man, whose brows were decorated with triumphal laurels, and whose name involved valour in perfection. Being challenged by M Mark Anthony to engage him in single combat, he very *calmly* answered the bearer of the message, in these striking words: " † If Anthony be weary of his life, tell him

* Cic. de off. Lib. 1. C. 19.

† See Lord Bacon's charge against Duels. Fol. vol. 2. p. 570.

‡ See Plut. Marc. Ant. vit. and Roll. Anc. Hist. vol. 7, p. 287.

“ him there are many other ways of death besides the point
 “ of my sword.” This was not considered as an act of
 cowardice, but shines and will for ever shine in the annals
 of history, as heroism in perfection. And the answer of
 Sir Walter Raleigh to an imprudent youth in similar cir-
 cumstances, is equally to be admired. Having received a
 challenge from this insolent young man, and afterwards
 being spit upon for refusing to accept it, the knight, taking
 his handkerchief from his pocket, made him this reply—
 “ Young man, if I could as easily wipe your blood from
 “ my conscience, as I can this injury from my face, I
 “ would, this moment, take away your life.” In general,
 indeed, such an answer as the following might be quite suf-
 ficient for the inhuman Duellist, who thirsts for your life :
 “ I fear not Thee, but I fear my God : my life is not my
 “ own : it is the property of heaven : † it is sacred to my
 “ Maker :

* *Semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt Virg.*

† Duelling, in short, is a dreadful complication of almost every species of guilt.
 It is a contempt both of human and divine authority. It is a defiance of the Ma-
 gistrate, whom alone the Legislature hath armed with the power of punishing of-
 fences. It is an insult to the King, as it deprives him, by its own caprices, of a
 subject; and it is a daring rebellion against the “ King of Kings,” who gave us
 life for the most valuable purposes, and who, only, hath the right of taking it
 away; and hath therefore wisely reserved in his own hands, the adjustment of in-
 juries and the punishment of wrongs. “ en Vigance is mine, I will repay.”

“ Maker : I owe it to the world. These children would be fatherless—this wife a widow—my friends irreparably injured and distressed.” Such feelings would do the greatest honour to humanity : they are not below the ambition of heroism, but, generally, are found connected with the bravest and most elevated minds.

Duelling, indeed, according to my idea, implies not any very extraordinary degree of fortitude or resolution. It is a rash and a tumultuous action ; supposes an absence of all those steady, deliberate reflexions, which constitute the hero ; indeed of all reflexion whatsoever. It is not cool, determined intrepidity, but an unnatural hurry of distracting passions, the delirium of excessive pride, or a paroxysm of resentment. Many have rushed on to the fighting of a Duel, who, when weighed in the “ * scales of real valour, “ have been found miserably wanting ;” and thousands have appeared undaunted in the field, who never, thus, would plunge their swords into a brother’s breast.

“ But this practice will procure you, as you suppose, reputation † and esteem.” The esteem of whom? only, I am

* Dan. 5. 27.

† Qui in duello contendunt, plerumque ad honorem (ut aiunt) recuperandum id agunt, ad quem finem eadem recte putent admitti. Quod mihi (ait Grotius) a ratione

am sure, of the unreflecting or abandoned. In the intercourse of social life, the humane and the dispassionate will not care for you, because you are capable of such desperate resentments, but will rather look upon you with terror or abhorrence; will you not, more probably, like the detested Cain,* “wander as so many vagabonds and fugitives upon the earth,” excluded from the common offices of kindness, and from that greatest sweetener of human life, friendship and affection? and, if you fancy it will recommend you to the notice of the other sex, those amongst them, be assured, whom such an act would please, are so totally *masculine*, are so entirely divested of that delicacy and softness, which nature hath strongly imprinted on their frames, that they ought to be shunned as so many monsters, and treated with neglect. If a man, who fights a Duel, be a

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pest

a ratione & pietate valde alienum videtur. Nam honor est opinio de excellentia; at si qui talem fert injuriam, is patientem se excellenter ostendit; atque ideo honorem auget magis quam minuit. Nec refert si quidam corrupto judicio virtutem hanc in probrum, confictis nominibus, traducant. Perversa enim illa judicia nec rem nec rei æstimationem immutant. Nec Christiani veteres hoc tantum viderunt, sed et Philosophi, qui dixerunt pusilli animi esse contumeliam ferre non posse—Quid si vero dicat aliquis de nobis, quod creditum, apud bonos existimationem nostram delibaret? Hunc quoque occidi posse, sunt qui doceant, mendose admodum et contra naturæ quoque jus. Nam interfectio ista non est modus aptus ad tuendam existimationem.

* Gen. 4. 14.

pest to society, a † woman who approves him for it, deserves an epithet, which language hath not, yet, invented, and sinks beneath the dignity of contempt.

Having, thus far, argued with a Duellist upon his own principles, I shall, now, advert to the consequences of this crime, as they are connected with religion and humanity. It is of no great consequence, some may say, in a moment of affected fortitude, to sacrifice their lives—but remember, boasting youth, if thou fallest, there is something horrid and dismal in the consequence. There is, certainly, a future state. There is an Eternity—there is such a thing as an * eternity of woe—thou diest in the commission of the blackest

† This sentiment may appear as necessary, as it is poignant and severe, when it is considered, that the Ladies in France treat a successful Duellist with particular attention. In any public places of amusement, the grand contention is, who shall sit nearest this *assassin of mankind*. As if it was their glory to be patronesses of cruelty, and gave a lustre to their features to encourage the effusion of human blood. I hope this taste hath not, yet, in any considerable degree, infected the fair inhabitants of Britain. If it hath, “how fallen from heaven!” may I say, how changed from that picture which Milton hath exhibited, as presenting the characteristic glory of their sex!

For contemplation He, and valour form'd;
For *softness* She, and *sweet attractive grace*.

* Regions of sorrow! doleful shades! where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all! *Milt. Parad. Lost.*

blackest crime—thy death precludes the possibility of repentance—and though I wish not to limit the mercies of heaven, yet upon all the principles of the gospel, so far as they are revealed to us, how desperate appears thy case ! Thou sealest thy condemnation with thy latest act, and darest God himself to the execution of thy will !

If thou survivest, and hast any sensibility, how dreadful is thy lot ! Thy heart may, perhaps, be hardened and insensible !—Thy Repentance, if thou shouldst repent, not equal to thy crime ! Thy conscience for ever, yea, for ever*, will torment thee ; “ where † thou goest, it will go ; where “ thou lodgest, it will lodge ; ” these ‡ hands, thou wilt “ say, will they never more be clean ? § Thy life will hang “ in fear and doubt : in the morning thou wilt cry, Would “ God it were evening ; and at even thou wilt say, Would “ God it were morning : ”—thy existence will be a burden ; thy death will be terrible, thou canst never make reparation to the injured ; “ the || voice of thy brother’s blood “ will be ever crying aloud from the earth, and, if it enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth,” will even the Redeemer save, or Providence protect thee ? Take then—for thou hast richly earned it—take thy pittance of visionary honour,

* *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo.*

† Ruth i. 16.

‡ Shakesp. Macbeth.

§ Deut. 28. 67.

|| Gen. 4. 10.

honour, for a life of black, despair—torments exquisite—possibly eternal—a life imbibtered with continual horrors—a death probably hopeless and desponding.

But very tender and affecting considerations are yet behind. “ We * are none of us born, or live merely for ourselves.” Thou art a member of society. But, instead of performing the duties it requires, wilt thou only pollute its principles and sentiments, by so horrid an example?—Thou hast parents, perhaps tottering with age, who have nursed thee in infancy, guided thee through youth, and watched thee to manhood. Thou owest them, certainly, gratitude and duty ; every thing which can lighten the burden of their years ; every thing which can cheer the evening of their days. And wilt thou bequeath them, by this horrid act, inconsolable affliction ? Wilt thou, thus, “ bring down their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave ?”

Thou hast a tender partner of thy cares. She conjures thee to desist from such an horrid enterprize—She pleads a thousand moving reasons—† She looks and looks again with a dis-

* Gen. 42. 38.

† How justly may one put into the mouth of so unhappy a woman, the words of Dido to Æneas.

Mene fugis ? per ego has lacrymas dextramque tuam te
Quando aliud mihi jam miseræ nihil ipsa reliqui

Per

a distracted fondness—the penell eloquence of a Raphael could scarcely do it justice, and she feels unutterable things. And wilt thou plunge her into such inexpressible distress? Wilt thou force her to some daring act of suicide, and tempt her to mix her blood with thy own? Weary† of life, as she justly may, wilt thou make her thus resolved to die? And shall *one* fatal, inauspicious moment, ruin *two* immortal souls?

Thou hast children, who cry for help, and cling round thee for support. Wilt thou not hear their cries? Wilt thou not pity their helpless sorrows? Wilt thou not wipe their trickling tears, and wilt thou turn them into the world—comfortless and uninstructed—not only without a parent, but (what is infinitely worse) with the remembrance of one who *might* have lived the counsellor of their infancy, and the firm guide of their youth?—but who fell—
 hear it conscience—hear it sensibility—who fell, untimely, by his own determination, a melancholy monument of hu-

man's frailty. And may the living portion be brought
 Per connubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos;

¶ Dulce meum, miserere domus labentis & istam.
 Oro, si quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem. Virg. Æn. 4.

† Tædet cœli convexa tueri.

* Prov. 2, 17.

man guilt, of human indiscretion!—O think not that these tender claims are beneath thy attention! Indulge them as they deserve, and let religion, conscience, honour, affection, and humanity, operating, all at once, unnerve that brutal arm, which is bent upon destruction, and make thine hardened heart soften and relent.

While I am indulging these awful reflexions, let it not be supposed, that I presume to decide on the eternal fate either of the unfortunate person, who hath fallen in this rencounter, or of him who survives. God forbid! that I should deal out the thunderbolts of Heaven, or venture to pronounce their doom! With regard to the deceased, Christianity forbids us to look “within the † vail,” or speculate on his allotment. We must leave him with his mixture of “frailties* and of virtues,” to the judgment of his God. As death has sealed his condition to Eternity, O! may the prayers he offered have been accepted! May Heaven have forgiven the imprudence of his conduct! May the few hours he had have secured his salvation! And may the surviving person be brought, in time, to the exercise of a full, Christian repentance, that the shedding of his blood may never hereafter, “be † required at his hands;” may neither

imbitter

* Gray's Elegy.

† Hebr.

† Liturgy of the Church.

imbitter his present life, or cloud his latest moments with remorse—and may all young people, in the fulness of spirits and luxuriance of health, learn and digest the important lesson, which this history holds forth, in such very striking language, for the regulation of their conduct.

Ye, who in the warm career of life, treat a parent's advice with coldness or disdain; despise too much, the ordinances of God, and the admonitions of a Preacher; look—I conjure you—at this melancholy spectacle—behold, in these untimely ashes, the fatal consequences of youthful gaiety and youthful indiscretion!—of “walking only in the way of your own heart, and in the sight of your own eyes!”—Think, for a moment, what would be the language of this, now, disembodied spirit, were he but permitted to return and address you! how pathetically would he correct your sentiments of honour! how tenderly would he conjure you to walk in all the paths of righteousness, and † cleave stedfastly unto your God! But this is mere, unavailing speculation. The hope for such an interview is vain! It vanishes in forming! He sleeps, never! never! to return! The fatal sword hath fixed his destiny for ever! “from that dread Bourn,‡ no traveller e'er returned to give

“ us

* Ecclef. 11. 9.

† Dent. 13. 4.

‡ Shakesp.

“us any information!” You can only read his advices as written in his blood! You can only contemplate them in the horrors of his tomb, or hear them as reechoed in the sighs or groans of his relatives and friends. Mistaken custom! Mistaken Fashion! what fatal ills are thine! The world at large could make him but the poorest recompence for his irreparable loss! To him, it, now, appears, what it really, always was, a shadow or a dream! and all his ideas of visionary honour have perished in the grave! Mourn, ye, who were ever his associates; drop—for he deserves it—the tributary tear. Consider, I beseech you, what are generally the “beginnings* of these sorrows;” what are, commonly, the first leading steps to these irremediable ills! Wine, women, gaming and unmanly pleasures; the absence of all serious thought, and the neglect of all religious ordinances; and, as ye wish not to fall in this pitiable manner, avoid such disorders; frequent the company, only, of the virtuous, and practice all the contrary duties. And let me, while I am upon this subject, be permitted to remind all military people (a body of men for whom I profess the highest respect; whose manners, generally, are pleasing, and whose hearts expanded) that their swords are given them

* Matt. 24. 8.

them to defend the nation, not to embroil it; † that they are appointed to *protect* the peace, and not to *disturb* it; and that, if with these weapons of death by their sides, they are individually litigious, intemperate and disordered, they become formidable, and objects of horreur to every virtuous citizen, in proportion as they ought to be his safeguard, and security, and protection. Their life, when out of service, is dangerous in the extreme, and naturally leads to dissipation and to pleasure; happy He, who can find out innocent amusements enough to fill up its vacuities, and firmly withstand the force of temptation! they have, however, frequently before their eyes, the example of One, whose ‡ conduct is as exemplary, as his station is exalted; what a pity it is, that they do not imitate so amiable a Superior, and remember, that whatever may be the local manners, customs, or dispositions of the various towns into which they may pass; however they may despise the peculiarities of this, or (what they may think) the illiberal character of any other place, yet surely the way to a general attention,

H

friendship,

† This alludes to some disturbances, which had been occasioned in the town by some gentlemen belonging to the Recruiting parties. It by no means extends to the Regiment of Dragoons, whose officers, in every view, are as respectable a set of men, as were ever, perhaps, stationed in this or in any other place.

‡ Major Price.

friendship, and esteem, lies only through the practice of a strict integrity, affability of manners, peaceableness of temper, and consistency of conduct.

I shall now beg leave to address young people of all possible descriptions, with one single closing question, which, in some degree, epitomizes what I have said, and concentrates this discourse. What are all our romantic notions of honour? What are all the echoes either of civil or military fame? What the universal applauses of the world, could we secure them by the action! when contrasted with the dreadful haunting remembrance of having been accessory to the shedding of a brother's blood—perhaps, for ever, ruining one of those immortal souls, for whom the Saviour died, Ingenuity, with all its artifices, cannot erase the impression—Infidelity, with all its reasonings, cannot allay the ghost—the excesses of wine can but inspire a momentary oblivion—the world and all its fulness cannot satisfy the injured—and, I may add, “is there any balm, excepting in Gilead,” for the healing of such a wounded breast?

I have delivered my sentiments with Christian freedom on this very delicate and interesting subject. As a man, I would gladly have declined such an office; as a minister of

Christ,

Christ, I durst not. I owed it to the church—I owed it to my conscience—I owed it to God—"I could not speak "smooth things, nor prophesy deceits." † I "can, now, "wash my hands like Pilate, and say, I am free from the "blood of this man."

May God incline the hearts of all young people to profit by these remarks; that some little stop may be put to that excess of dissipation, which buries religion and conscience in its ruins, destroys their present usefulness and peace, and threatens their eternal hopes; that they may consider and remember there is a God and an Eternity; that‡ Individual may no more "lift up sword against Individual, nor practise this *most cruel species* of war any more;" " * that "righteousness may run down amongst us as a river, and "judgment as a mighty brook; that the fruit of righteousness may be *peace*; and the effect of righteousness, " *quietness* and assurance for ever."

† Matth. 27. 24.

‡ Isai. 2. 4.

* Isai. 32. 17.

T H E E N D.

Christ, I thank not. I owed it to the church—I owed it to
my conscience—I owed it to God—I could not speak
"smooth things, nor prophesy flatteries." "If I am now,
"wash my hands like Pilate, and say, I am free from the
"blood of this man."

May God incline the hearts of all young people to profit
by these remarks; that some high hope may be put in that
excess of dissipation, which banishes religion and conscience
in its ruins; destroy their present pleasures and peace, and
threaten their eternal hopes; that they may consider and
remember there is a God and an Eternity; that individual
may no more "lift up sword against individual, nor prince
"against prince, and speak of any more," but that
"righteousness may run down as a river, and
"judgment as a mighty brook; that the fruit of righteous-
"ness may be peace, and the effect of righteousness,
"quietness and assurance for ever."

